

Message Text

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SUBJECT: ECONOMICS OF AGRICULTURAL PLENUM OF CPSU
CENTRAL COMMITTEE

SUMMARY. CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE HELD AN AGRICULTURAL
PLENUM ON JULY 3 AND 4. JUDGING FROM THE PRINTED
MATERIALS FROM THE PLENUM, NO NEW BASIC ECONOMIC
APPROACHES WERE ADOPTED. PLENUM IS NEVERTHELESS
IMPORTANT IN OTHER RESPECTS AND NUMEROUS FINE TUNING
CHANGES ARE IMPLIED IN CENTRAL PRESS STORIES TO
DATE, MAINLY ADMINISTRATIVE, ORGANIZATIONAL AND
SOCIOLOGICAL. AVERAGE ANNUAL GRAIN PRODUCTION GOAL
FOR 1981-85 OF 238 TO 243 MILLION TONS WAS ANNOUNCED,
ALONG WITH MEAT TARGET FOR 1985 OF 19.5 MILLION TONS.
EXCEPT FOR ABOVE FIGURES AND NEWLY ANNOUNCED FERTILIZER
AND FEED CONCENTRATES, BREZHNEV'S REPORT TO PLENUM IS
LACKING IN ANY IMPORTANT SPECIFICS ON FUTURE OUTPUT
OF OTHER FARM AND FOOD PRODUCTS AND OFF-FARM INPUTS.
CURRENT HIGH RATE OF INVESTMENT DURING PRESENT FIVE
YEAR PLAN IS PROMISED TO CONTINUE, WITH POSSIBLE
INCREASE. SEPTEL ON POLITICAL ASPECTS OF PLENUM
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FOLLOWS. END SUMMARY.

1. CENTRAL PRESS ON JULY 4 CARRIED ANNOUNCEMENT OF
REGULAR PLENUM OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF CPSU DEVOTED
PRIMARILY TO AGRICULTURE ON JULY 3. JULY 5 PRESS
CARRIES MAJOR RESOLUTION ON AGRICULTURE ADOPTED BY
PLENUM. ON JULY 3 BREZHNEV IS REPORTED TO HAVE

DELIVERED LENGTHY SPEECH ENTITLED "REPORT ON THE LONG-RUN DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE IN THE USSR". ENTIRE REPORT WAS PUBLISHED IN ALL MAJOR PAPERS, BUT NO EDITORIAL-TYPE ARTICLES HAVE YET APPEARED. NUMBER OF POLITICAL FIGURES FROM MAJOR FARM AREAS THEN "DISCUSSED" THE REPORT, INCLUDING SHCHERBITSKIY (UKRAINE), SOLOMENTSEV (RSFSR), KUNAYEV (KAZAKHSTAN), ALIYEV (AZERBAIJAN), MEDUNOV (KRASNODAR), PRIEZHEV (RYAZANSK), RASHIDOV (UZBEKISTAN), AND AGMIN MESYATS. (KULAKOV IS NOT MENTIONED).

2. REPORT IS OVER THREE FULL PAGES AND DIVIDED INTO SIX PARTS, AND THERE ARE 13 RESOLUTIONS. INITIAL READING OF THE MATERIALS REVEALS NO SIGNIFICANT POLICY CHANGES FROM THOSE PRESENTLY BEING FOLLOWED. THIS WAS LINE TAKEN BY SOVIET AGRICULTURAL OFFICIALS, INCLUDING AGMIN MESYATS, WHO SAID AT SPASO RECEPTION JULY 4 THAT NO BASIC CHANGES WERE ANNOUNCED IN THE BREZHNEV REPORT. THIS MEANS, FOR EXAMPLE, THE CONTINUATION OF THE HIGH -- AND STEADILY INCREASING IN RELATION TO NON-AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENT -- LEVEL OF AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENT OF THE PRESENT AND PREVIOUS FIVE YEAR PLANS. THERE IS ALSO INDICATION OF AN INCREASE IN THE 11TH PLAN OF THE PRESENT 27 PERCENT SHARE OF TOTAL INVESTMENT WHICH AGRICULTURE IS ANNUALLY RECEIVING. MESYATS, WHEN ASKED IF THIS RATE MIGHT BE INCREASED, STATED THIS WAS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POSSIBLE BUT DECISION WOULD NOT BE MADE UNTIL THE 11TH FIVE YEAR PLAN IS DEVELOPED, BUT IT IS MENTIONED SPECIFICALLY IN THE RESOLUTIONS. (GOSPLAN HINTED TO US SEVERAL WEEKS AGO THAT ANOTHER INCREASE IN AGRICULTURE'S SHARE OF INVESTMENT WAS LIKELY IN THE 11TH FIVE YEAR PLAN). AGRICULTURAL CONCENTRATION AND INDUSTRIALIZATION POLICIES, ANOTHER BASIC TENET OF PRESENT DOGMA FOR THIS SECTOR OF THE ECONOMY, ALSO APPEARS BASICALLY UNCHANGED, ALTHOUGH MODIFICATIONS IN THEIR IMPLEMENTATION ARE DEFINITELY IMPLIED. INDIVIDUAL PLOTS ARE CITED AS "USEFUL" (NOT ESSENTIAL) AND DESERVING OF INCREASED STATE SUPPORT. THE TEXT OF THE NEW CONSTITUTION ON THESE PRIVATE PLOTS IS REPEATED. THUS, NO NEW POLICY GROUND IS BROKEN HERE EITHER. BREZHNEV'S POLICY LINE AT THE 16TH TRADE UNION CONGRESS LAST YEAR OF CONTINUING MEAT PRODUCTION BY COLLECTIVES AND STATE FARMS IS ALSO REITERATED.

3. AVERAGE ANNUAL GRAIN PRODUCTION GOAL FOR THE 11TH FIVE YEAR PLAN (1981-85) IS PROJECTED AT 238 TO 243 MILLION TONS, AND THE 1990 TARGET IS ONE TON PER CAPITA -- ABOUT 280 MILLIONS IF POPULATION GROWTH CONTINUES AT

SAME RATE AS IN PREVIOUS 10 YEARS. THE MEAT GOAL FOR 1985 WAS ALSO ANNOUNCED FOR THE FIRST TIME. IT IS 19.5 MILLION TONS. NO OTHER QUANTITATIVE PRODUCTION GOALS WERE GIVEN, BUT GENERAL MENTION IS MADE OF INCREASES IN THE OUTPUT OF OTHER FOODS BY 1985 TO LEVELS "CLOSER TO" SCIENTIFIC CONSUMPTION NORMS. FUTURE PRIORITIES IN MEAT PRODUCTION MAY BE INDICATED BY ORDER IN WHICH BREZHNEV REPORT DISCUSSED PRODUCTION POLICY. THIS WAS AS FOLLOWS: BEEF, SWINE, POULTRY, AND SHEEP AND GOATS.

4. AGRICULTURAL POLICY RHETORIC OF THE 25TH CONGRESS, 10TH FIVE YEAR PLAN AND SUBSEQUENT RESOLUTIONS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE COMPRISES THE BULK OF THE IMPORTANT FIRST TWO SECTIONS OF BREZHNEV'S SPEECH WHICH ARE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ENTITLED: A) THE AGRARIAN POLICY OF THE PARTY IN ACTUALITY: BASIC RESULTS, AND 2) THE OVERALL INCREASE (RAISING) OF THE LEVEL OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION. THE SPEECH AND THE RESOLUTIONS OF COURSE CARRY MANY SHARP CRITICISMS OF PERFORMANCE IN NUMEROUS INDIVIDUAL SECTORS OF SOCIETY BUT THE TONE APPEARS TO BE ESSENTIALLY CONSTRUCTIVE, NOT SCALP HUNTING OR IMPLYING MAJOR REORGANIZATIONAL MOTIVES. NO MENTION HAS BEEN SEEN OF ANY ATTEMPT TO REFORM THE ENTIRE FOOD CHAIN. OTHER

SECTIONS OF THE REPORT, IN THE ORDER COVERED, DEAL WITH ECONOMIC QUESTIONS OF COLLECTIVE AND STATE FARMS, MORE ACTIVE AND EFFICIENT DEVELOPMENT OF INTER-FARM COOPERATION, STRENGTHENING RURAL CONSTRUCTION AND LASTLY WORK ORGANIZATION AND IDEOLOGY IN RURAL AREAS.

5. MENTION IS MADE OF FUTURE IMPROVEMENT, QUALITATIVELY AND/OR QUANTITATIVELY IN OFF-FARM INPUTS TO AGRICULTURE, E.G., PLANT PROTECTANTS, FERTILIZER, COMBINES AND FARM EQUIPMENT, FEED AND LAND AMELIORATION. THE RURAL INFRA-STRUCTURE (ROADS, HOUSING, EVEN INDIVIDUAL RECREATION FACILITIES, ETC.) IS ALSO TO BE FURTHER STRENGTHENED. THIS AREA MAY INDEED BE THE BIGGEST SINGLE BENEFACITOR OF THE PLENUM. NO FIGURES ARE GIVEN FOR ANY AGRICULTURAL CAPITAL ITEMS, EXCEPT THAT 11TH PLAN FERTILIZER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GOAL FOR DELIVERIES TO AGRICULTURE IS PROJECTED AT 135-140 MILLION TONS AND THE FEED CONCENTRATES TARGET FOR THE PERIOD IS 7 MILLION TONS.

6. FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF SOME OF THE FINE TUNING TYPE CHANGES NOTED IN THE MATERIALS TO DATE: PROCUREMENT PRICE INCREASES FOR MILK, EGGS, VEGETABLES AND OTHER FOODSTUFFS; CONCENTRATION OF AGRO-CHEMICAL SERVICES, CENTRALLY AND LOCALLY; NUMEROUS PROPOSALS FOR BETTER AND MORE MECHANIZATION OF MANY TYPES; AGRICULTURAL CHEMICALS OF ALL TYPES ARE TO BE PRODUCED AND SUPPLIED; ELECTRIFICATION AND FURTHER IRRIGATION AND DRAINAGE PROJECTS, ETC. ALL IS PROMISED IN ORDER TO COMPLETE THE ON-GOING FULL CONCENTRATION AND SPECIALIZATION OF SOVIET AGRICULTURE WITH MODERN TECHNOLOGY -- AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. NO TERMINAL DATE IS GIVEN, BUT THE IMPLICATION IS BY THE END OF THE 11TH PLAN IN 1985.

7. COMMENT: PLENUM WILL, AT A MINIMUM, BE TAKEN TOGETHER WITH THE 1965 PLENUM AS THE AUTHORITATIVE "PROGRAMMATIC" STATEMENT ON AGRICULTURE. PROBABLY FOR MANY YEARS TO COME, IT WILL BE CITED AS THE POLICY BASIS FOR ALL AGRICULTURAL MEASURES, NEW AND OLD. PRACTICALLY ALL BASIC PROBLEMS AND PANACEA ARE TREATED.

8. "SAYING IT, DOESN'T MAKE IT SO", AS MUCH AS THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP MAY DESIRE. GIVEN DIFFICULTIES IN MEETING CURRENT FIVE YEAR PLAN GOAL FOR GRAIN PRODUCTION, THE 238-243 MILLION TON AVERAGE GOAL FOR THE 11TH FIVE YEAR PLAN, LOOKS OVER-AMBITIOUS AT FIRST BRUSH. PRODUCTION AVERAGED 181.5 TONS IN 1971-75 PERIOD AND HAS BEEN ABOUT 21U TONS PER ANNUM IN FIRST TWO YEARS OF PRESENT FIVE YEAR PLAN. THIS DOES NOT

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MEAN, OF COURSE, THAT SOVIET PRODUCTION IN ANY GIVEN YEAR (EVEN THIS YEAR) CANNOT REACH THESE HIGHER LEVELS, BUT IT WOULD APPEAR TO REQUIRE NEAR-IDEAL WEATHER -- A RARE PHENOMENON -- PLUS VERY EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IMPROVED TECHNOLOGY AND THE FINE TUNING WHICH WE HAVE CITED ABOVE. THE MEAT GOAL OF 19.5 IS DIRECTLY TIED TO THE GRAIN TARGET AND AMOUNTS TO APPROXIMATELY 4 PERCENT PER YEAR INCREASE BY 1985. THIS DOES NOT REPRESENT HIGH EXPECTATIONS. FURTHER, SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN FEED EFFICIENCY WILL BE REQUIRED TO MEET THIS GOAL, EVEN IF THE 1981-85 GRAIN PRODUCTION TARGET IS MET. IT SHOULD BE RECALLED THAT MEAT CONSUMPTION IS PRESENTLY AROUND 56 KILOGRAMS PER CAPITA. THE "SCIENTIFIC CONSUMPTION NORM" IS 85. THUS, ACHIEVEMENT OF THE 19.5 PRODUCTION GOAL BY 1985 WOULD NOT RESULT IN SUFFICIENTLY HIGH PER CAPITA CONSUMPTION TO MEET THE SCIENTIFIC NORM. MORE IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, IS THE FACT THAT UNSATISFIED DEMAND AT PRESENT PRICE LEVELS IS CONSIDERED AT PRESENT TO BE AROUND 70 KILOS, THE GOAL FOR 1985. TOON

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